

GENERAL PROCESS

OCTOBER 2007

The Select Board hosts a joint meeting of the Select Board, Finance Committee, School Committee, and Library Trustees to review preliminary revenue and expense projections for the next several budget cycles.

The Budget Coordinating Group made up of Town, School, Library and Finance Committee officials will meet periodically throughout the budget develop process to serve as a clearinghouse for budget information, to refine a master town/school/library budget development calendar (*link to calendar will be provided here when complete*), to review a long-range financial projection that includes prior years' results, current year approved budget, revenues/expenditures for the current and next three fiscal years, and reserves, and to develop a common understanding of issues related to budget priorities and of methods of sharing resources ultimately leading to a recommended course of action. The Budget Coordinating Group will disseminate the group's recommendations and conclusions to the public, will take no votes, and work to achieve consensus.



NOVEMBER 2007

The Finance Committee recommends FY 08 spending guidelines to Town Manager, Select Board, School Committee, Superintendent of Schools, Library Trustees and Library Director.



NOVEMBER 2007 – JANUARY 2008

Town Manager, Superintendent of Schools and Library Director develop proposed operating budgets and capital recommendations.

On January 16, as specified in section 5.1 of the Amherst Town Government Act, "the town manager shall submit to each member of the select board and finance committee a recommendation in writing of the appropriations for the town government for the ensuing fiscal year, ...showing specifically the amount recommended to be provided for each fund and department,...[and]an estimate of the receipts of the current year and an estimate of the amount of income from all sources of revenue exclusive of taxes upon property in the ensuing year..."

The Superintendent of Schools submits to the School Committee a spending proposal for the elementary schools and a budget for the Regional School District that includes an estimate of revenues from all sources and an estimate of probable expenditures. Proposals are presented to the respective School Committees and to the Finance Committee.

The Library Director presents a budget to Library Trustees that includes estimates of revenues from all sources and proposed expenditures for the ensuing fiscal year. The proposal is presented to the Library Trustees and the Finance Committee.



JANUARY – APRIL 2008

The Finance Committee reviews proposed FY 08 Capital and Operating Budgets and formulates its recommendations, which will be presented to Town Meeting. The Select Board will also review the Finance Committee's recommendations so that it can make recommendations to Town Meeting regarding the Finance Committee's recommendations. The public is invited to attend any of these meetings and to voice its opinions. The Finance Committee generally meets on Thursday evenings. The Select Board meets on selected Mondays. The Joint Capital Planning Committee (JCPC) reviews and formulates recommendations for capital spending in the next ensuing fiscal year. The JCPC generally meets on Thursdays at Noon. The Community Preservation Act Committee (CPAC) makes recommendations to the Town Meeting annually for the acquisition, creation and preservation of open space, for the acquisition and preservation of historic resources, for the acquisition, creation and preservation of land for recreational use, for the creation, preservation and support of community housing and for rehabilitation or restoration of such open space, historic resources, land for recreational use and community housing that is acquired or created as provided in the Community Preservation Act. Notices of meetings are published in the Daily Hampshire Gazette. The Town's website www.amherstma.gov posts meeting agendas and minutes, the Town Manager's proposed budget document, and budget-related committee reports.



APRIL – MAY 2008

Town Meeting considers recommendations for Town, school, and library operating and capital budgets and adopts a FY 08 Budget.



JULY 2007 – JUNE 2008

Amendments to the budget may be made at any Town Meeting held during FY 08. Such amendments follow the same process of review by the Finance Committee, Select Board and Joint Capital Planning Committee where appropriate.